

Committee on Resources,

Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife & Oceans

[fisheries](#) - - Rep. Wayne Gilchrest, Chairman

U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515-6232 - - (202) 226-0200

Witness Statement

Coastal Zone Management Act Reauthorization
Testimony Before the
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Resources
Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans
By
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Maryland Department of Agriculture
May 24, 2001

Introduction

Thank you, Chairman Gilchrest and members of the Committee, for providing me the opportunity to speak here today. My name is Louise Lawrence and I am the Chief of the Office of Resource Conservation at the Maryland Department of Agriculture. My section within the Department of Agriculture has responsibilities related to agricultural soil conservation, water quality and natural resource protection programs. We coordinate program delivery and implementation through a network of local, state and federal cooperating agencies. I serve on the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission, Maryland Coastal Bays Implementation Committee, Maryland Interagency NPS Coordination and Grants Committees and have been the liaison for Coastal Zone Management programs for my agency since 1985. I am here to provide comments on the reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act.

Coastal Zone Management Act in Maryland

The coastal zone in Maryland covers two-thirds of the state, encompassing 16 of our 23 counties. Although the state's total physical area is not large compared to a number of coastal states, Maryland's extensive shoreline and burgeoning population place it with 15 out of 35 states whose 306 program funding is currently capped. Federal coastal zone management support to Maryland averages \$2.5 million annually.

Maryland's Coastal Zone Management Program is a networked program. This cooperative approach applies both to program implementation responsibilities and program funding. Maryland Department of Natural Resources acts as the lead agency coordinating the program. A number of local and state agencies carry out implementation. For example, one of the responsibilities of the Maryland Department of Agriculture is implementation of agricultural soil conservation and water quality programs. Technical assistance for this program element is delivered through local soil conservation district personnel. CZM grants will support four technical positions in 2001 to assist to farmers in targeted watersheds. The Maryland Department of Agriculture will provide up to 87.5% of the cost of installing best management practices implemented by

farmers to control erosion, reduce nutrient movement and manage animal waste. This is just one example of how CZM programs are coordinated and federal funds leveraged to achieve program goals.

Program Coordination and Funding Flexibility

The coastal zone program has been the precursor and, in many cases, the catalyst for this coordinated approach being applied in a number of programs to expand water quality protection, habitat enhancement, living resources protection and community partnerships statewide.

- **1983:** Maryland's Chesapeake Bay Initiatives emphasized nutrient reduction and water quality objectives to improve habitat and protect fisheries resources. The program was applied to Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed encompassing all or part of every county.
- **1985:** The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Protection Program created the framework for locally developed land use policies for the fragile area within 1000 feet of tidal waters. Implementation is through community partnerships within 16 CZM counties and over 60 local jurisdictions. Coastal zone management funding has provided crucial support to local efforts to implement these requirements.
- **1989:** Section 319 of the Clean Water Act required states to address non-point source pollution in a comprehensive statewide plan. An interagency team continues to coordinate and implement these programs.
- **1992:** Implementation of practices to achieve Chesapeake Bay Program goals is delineated by watershed and community input and ownership through Tributary Strategy Implementation Teams fostered.
- **1996:** Maryland received funding under the National Estuary Program and began a coordinated approach to develop strategies to address water quality, fish and wildlife, recreation and navigation measures and community and economic development through local, state, federal and community partnerships in Maryland's Coastal Bays watersheds. Program implementation through a networked approach began in 2000.
- **1997:** Section 6217 emphasized the importance of addressing non-point sources of water quality in the coastal zone and created a number of management measures to be implemented. Maryland's networked program was the first to be approved nationally.
- **2000:** Renewal of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement, in addition to strengthening commitments to nutrient reduction and water quality, places new emphasis on sediment control and habitat protection and enhancement.

For all their similarity of objectives, these programs also have slightly different emphasis expressed by the strings attached to the federal funding they provide and the performance measures they use to assess progress. Maryland receives approximately \$8 million in combined federal funds from the Coastal Zone Management Program, Non-point Source Protection Program (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act) and the Chesapeake Bay Implementation Program . In state fiscal year 2000, state agencies implementing strategies to achieve these programs' objectives spent \$97.5 million in state funds. This budget does not include all staff and funding resources provided by the network of local, regional and federal partnerships engaged in achieving program objectives.

The current financial commitment to coastal and non-point programs is not adequate to meet the challenge posed by these complex natural resource management issues. Funding is a fraction of what has been dedicated to address the more easily targeted and measurable point source issues. Estimates of what it will take to achieve the new and ambitious Chesapeake Bay Program goals are simply expressed by the motto: *Big Ideas, Big Policy, Big Money.*

Maryland, despite its significant financial commitment to coastal zone management program objectives, depends on the resources brought to the table by federal grants and the technology transfer accomplished by collaborations engendered by these networked programs. We count on federal funds to help us fill in program needs or gaps that are not supported with state money. For example, Maryland's instituted a policy in the mid-1980's which prioritized agricultural staff resources to activities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. In the mid-1990's when the state budget was static, we were able to use Coastal Zone Management funding to provide a technical position at the local soil conservation district to help farmers implement best management practices in the Coastal Bays. Adding this essential piece to a puzzle that already included adequate state cost share for BMP installation, allowed Maryland to accelerate agricultural BMP implementation in the Coastal Bays by filling a gap that would have otherwise gone unaddressed.

It is important that the Coastal Zone Management Program maintain the flexibility necessary to allow states to fill in gaps and adapt resources available to their specific budgetary puzzle.

Recommendations

It is important that the Coastal Zone Management Act be reauthorized to assure accomplishments and ongoing efforts to protect coastal resources and communities continue to be promoted by support at the federal level. The goals, objectives and strategies of the Coastal Zone Management Program are still appropriate for the issues we face in 2001. I commend efforts to translate these accomplishments to measurable results that the public can understand. I urge you to make the process of developing these measures interactive and flexible so states who implement coastal zone and related programs can maintain consistency among varied program efforts.

Foremost in terms of need is funding. As previously noted, the resources available do not begin to match the enormity of the undertaking necessary to achieve program goals. If strides are to continue in the face of increasing pressure on the resources in coastal areas, additional financial resources will have to be allocated.

A related concern is the current cap placed on 306 funding. Despite modest national funding increases, Maryland funds have been flat over the past 8 years because of a funding cap place on states with large populations and extensive shoreline. This year, the funding cap will limit available resource support to 15 of the 35 coastal states. The language in the draft bill will help address this issue by ensuring that all eligible coastal states receive increased funding in years where the appropriation increases.

Finally, I'd like to reiterate the need to maintain the flexibility currently built into the program so states can continue to coordinate federal funds and fill in gaps to achieve program objectives. Earmarking or restricting the use of funds will impact base program activities and reduce our ability to transition programs and test drive new ideas. I respectfully suggest the committee consider one of the following ideas to support local communities within the CZM Program:

1. Support to local communities can be achieved without a direct earmark. This can be accomplished not limiting the definition of local community support to direct project implementation. In Maryland we have provided mapping resources, planning resources and staff support to assist local communities in implementing coastal programs. All of these efforts were targeted to fill an unaddressed need and achieved program objectives.

2. Include support to local communities as an objective within the performance evaluation system. This

would encourage states to utilize all funding sources to assure objectives supporting local government are implemented.

3. Split out the local government section as the Senate Bill does so that it has its own dedicated funding source that will not compete with base funding.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Maryland's support of reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act. Coastal states have come a long way in understanding and addressing this moving target of coastal resources issues. We must build flexibility into our programs and innovation and creativity into our collaborative approaches to resolve the complex issues presented by coastal resource protection. More must be done to protect these fragile resources for the environmental health and economic well being of coastal communities. Thank you.

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Introduction

Maryland recognizes the important foundation for coastal resource protection established by Coastal Zone Management Act and supports its reauthorization.

Coastal Zone Management Act in Maryland

Maryland's program is networked with local, state, and federal agencies. An example is the delivery of agricultural soil conservation and water quality programs by the Maryland Department of Agriculture. The technical delivery system includes local soil conservation districts in every county.

Program Coordination and Funding Flexibility

Coordinating all the local, state, regional and federal programs that target efforts to protect coastal resources

can be challenging. When the puzzle is well assembled however, benefits that result are much greater than any one piece could have supported. It is important that states have the flexibility to continue to use federal funding sources to fill gaps in their programs to achieve the Coastal Zone Management Act goals. State programs should be evaluated on program effectiveness and outcomes regardless of funding source.

Recommendations

Reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act needs to include increased funding.

The Committee should continue to work with the Appropriations Committee on language similar to the discussion draft bill to relax cap restrictions and more equitably allocate increased appropriations.

The Committee should explore alternative means of assuring adequate support is provided to local communities without impact to base programs.

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